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Science and Philosophy as the Theme of Poetry WITH SIDELIGHTS ON VERGIL

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I

Aristotle said that poetry is of a higher seriousness than history. The Romans felt misgivings about light verse. Horace, in his *Odes*, had produced the most artistic achievement by a Roman poet; yet, in beginning the *Epistles*, he announces (in St. Paul's phrase), "I am putting away verse and other childish things." Discarding trifles, leaving play to children, he is to find the rhythms and measures of the good life, no longer those of the lyre (2. 2. 141-4). Though he tells Augustus that he is not equal to epic (2. 1. 250-9), that is a bit of diplomacy, his real design being morals.

In the same diplomatic situation, addressing Augustus (2. 10), Propertius affects to be contemplating epic; and lightly says (3. 3) that Apollo rebuked him for doing so, as Cupid did Ovid (*Am.* 1. 1. 1-4). He decides to leave this to Vergil (2. 34. 61-6), about to give birth (he recklessly prophesies) to something or other greater than the *Iliad*. The shortcoming he really feels (2. 34. 51-4) is rather that he does not investigate nature, the sun and the moon, the immortality of the soul, whether thunder-bolts are aimed at the guilty (cf. Lucret. 6. 387-422). He hopes (3. 5. 23-46) that, his youth having gone to love, his maturity may study ethics, teleology, the phases of the moon, winds, clouds, the rainbow, earthquakes, eclipses, the constellations and seasons, why the sea does not overflow, whether the fabled creatures of Hades are actual, or fear ends with death, whether a day is coming which shall overturn the citadels of the world. As to the last, compare Lucretius 5.95, 1000, 1213f, and reminiscences of these passages in Ovid, *Amores* 1.15. 23f and *Tristia* 2.426. In fact, all these topics are in Lucretius.

Cicero had turned into Latin poetry the *Phaenomena* of Aratus. Tibullus at least mentions that he does *not* take up the wanderings of the sun and the phases of the moon (2. 4. 17f); and in 3. 7 (or 4. 1). 18-23, the poet of the Tibullan corpus leaves it to another to sing of earth resting on air, of the sea, the ether. Horace reports on Iccius (*Epist.* 1. 12. 16-20) as dealing with what keeps the sea in bounds, the seasons, motions of the stars, and the question of their divinity, phases of the moon, what philosopher is right about the meaning of the universe.

We think of Vergil's famous tribute to Lucretius (*Georg.* 2. 490-3), including the reminiscence of Lucretius 3. 1072: *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas . . . Fortunatus et ille*. Curiously like this is Juvenal 13. 19-22: Great is victorious philosophy; but fortunate they, too, who have learned from practical experience how to bear the hardships of life.

Usually, like the songs in Tennyson's "Princess," poems imbedded in longer poems are still more poetical. In the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes, the bard sings (1. 496-511) of the separation of earth, heaven, and sea with ending of their strife, movement of sun, moon, and stars, of mountains and rivers. In *Aeneid* 1. 742-6 (amplified from *Georgics* 2. 481f), the bard sings of the wandering moon, the labors of the sun; whence men and beasts, rain and fire; of constellations and the short days of winter. The *Georgics*, in a humbler frame than all this, is yet the most unified and thoroughly sincere work of Vergil; and the poet's own estimate of it, as compared with the *Aeneid*, in which he repeatedly quotes from it, has much to be said for it.

Do science and philosophy quench poetry? Did the theory of evolution spoil "In Memoriam?"

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life.

*

'So careful of the type?' but no.
From scarped cliff and quarried stone
She cries, 'A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go.'

Is geology fatal to this? physical geography to Shakespeare's sixty-fourth sonnet? astronomy to the eighth Psalm? "Poetry," said Shelley, "is the impassioned expression which is on the countenance of all science." The myth of the *Phaedrus* is astronomical, the prose-poem of the *Timaeus* cosmological. The macrocosm and the good life can surpass all other themes of poetry. For truth is beauty.

Some have said that it was unfortunate that Lucretius (the most inspired of Roman poets—a poet's poet) chose so prosaic a theme.¹ William Bolitho gave a report of a speech by the physicist Millikan.² He wrote in part,

Astronomy has the same vocabulary as the highest lyric poetry: orbits, galaxies, the extra-galactic spiral nebulae, the depth of snow-fed lakes where alone can be measured the bombardment of stellar light. . . . The hall was dead silent. He was talking of the destiny of our race, these clots of blood on a clod. I tell you, that was a magnificent speech! Even we, who knew nothing, set our teeth and stared at him. The petty luxury of the hotel room, the walls themselves, receded with a noiseless rush (*moenia mundi discedunt*: Lucret. 3.16f). We listened to him like troops behind a captain blowing a trumpet for us all through the eternal silences of infinite space.

II

Let us try, against this background, briefly to contrast the *Aeneid* as traditional epic with the poet himself as he emerges from it on occasion; mythology, war, rhetoric on the one hand—truth to nature, philosophy, ethics on the other. The greater sincerity of Vergil in these intervals gives us, I think, the more truly poetic passages; perhaps a greater clarity in the very Latinity there results.

In conversation with me once, contrasting the spontaneity of Homer and Lucretius, Professor Shorey said, "Vergil is an *acquired* taste." The more one learns of the conflicting myths, in prose and verse accounts, which were his sources for the *Aeneid*; of Apollonius, Ennius, Lucretius—not Homer only—as his poetic models; of prescriptions of epic convention, Alexandrian influences, pressures on him of political considerations: the more one appreciates the conscientious industry and the discrimination he brought to a complicated task. *Tantae molis erat Romanum condere carmen*.

One senses an alternation between the material and general treatment of it to which he was committed, and the poet himself. There is the mythology. I cannot feel that Vergil wrote with enthusiasm of Jupiter's compliment to Juturna in the presence of his wife (12.140), that she was his favorite of all the women he had violated; or of the vamping of Vulcan (8.388ff) to the end that he should make some quite unnecessary armor called for only by Homeric tradition; or of Juno threatening to *raise hell* (to translate 7.312 literally. Cf. 10.39f). Nor does the Hellenistic sensationalism of passages like 8.260f, where Hercules squeezed Cacus' eyeballs till they popped out (of a piece with Plautus' *Rudens* 659) seem to represent Vergil at his best.

Scarcely has he begun the epic, when he speaks aside, *Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* Wrath was the one trait in gods most objected to by the Epicureans.³ *Scilicet*, Dido is made to say (4.379f), *is superis labor est, ea cura quietos sollicitat*. Remember their *sedes quietae* in Lucretius 3.18; *neque ulla res animi pacem delibat tempore in ullo. Casus deusne* (12.321), seems a concession to the Epicureans. In the brilliant second book, at the slaying of Ripheus, "most just of the Trojans," comes the bitter aside, *dis aliter visum* (428); again, the skeptical outburst of Priam, *si qua est caelo pietas quae talia curat* (536. Cf. 1.603f). There are the words of Nisus (9.184f) before self-chosen, extra-hazardous duty: *Dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt, Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?*

War was required; and the gentle Vergil grimly did his duty—even overdid it, perhaps because his composition was then more perfunctory. Warriors throw fragments of mountains about (9.569; 10.698 and especially 128). Pandarus and Bitias are tall as fir-trees or mountains (9.674). No *iaculum* could kill Bitias; some sort of bazooka is required (703ff). Yet Turnus kills each brother at his first attempt (703; 749ff). Turnus later (12.899) throws at Aeneas a stone which twelve men of later time could not lift.⁵ But he is easily killed by the wounded Aeneas (921ff). If Pandarus and Bitias are huge, Turnus must be gigantic, Aeneas colossal. It is the Hollywood, the Hellenistic technique.

But, as for Vergil, with the Epicureans he hated the *belli rabies* (8.327), the *scelerata insania belli* (7.461). We remember the moral appeal to the souls of Pompey and Caesar in 6.826-35. Editors think he had Lucretius 3.83f in mind when he cried, "What fear urged on these and those to resort to arms and invite the sword?" (10.9f). He prefers rather the peaceful Italian countryside; its denizens, Turnus and other enemies of the lay figure Aeneas, whom he depicts *con amore*; young men

(Ascanius, Euryalus, Pallas, Lausus) toward whom he is so tender.

After giving Mezentius a bad character in advance (8.483-8), he seems rather to admire him once he is on the stage. Father Sullivan has provided an admirably sympathetic study of this warrior.⁶ *Contemptor divum* he is (7.648). But there is a certain sincere dignity about him, as he discards the mythological machinery (10.773-5). "Right hand, a god to me, and weapon which I balance for the cast, assist me now. I vow that you yourself, Lausus, shall be a trophy clad in spoils stripped from a brigand's body."

Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last: before my body
I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff;
And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'

Even the boisterous atheism of Euripides' *Cyclops* (334f), as he sacrifices to "this great belly, first of deities," carries more conviction than do all the commercial dealings (Plato, *Euthyphro* 14E) of men with the current gods.

I am far from saying that Vergil's greatest sincerity is as an atheist, or exclusively as an Epicurean. But in the philosophical matter of the sixth book, from various sources, or in such reflections as 10.467-71 and 501-5 below, one can really see him "majestic in his sadness at the doubtful doom of human kind."

Stat sua cuique dies, breve et irreparabile tempus
omnibus est vitae; sed famam extendere factis,
hoc virtutis opus.

*
nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae
et servare modum rebus sublata secundis.

However superior to Lucretius in technique, Vergil is not always as true to nature in his representations. That science can be touched by poesy, is well exemplified in his famous description, within the limits of truth, of the rainbow, "trailing a thousand varied colors against the sun."

¹See "Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, viewed as Epic," TAPA 78.337. ²"Space and Stars," reprinted from the *New York World* in the *University of Chicago Magazine* for June, 1929. The parenthesis in the quotation is mine. ³See "The Religion of the Ancient Atomists," CB 23.47. ⁴Cf. Heraclitus, fr. 119 Diels; Menander 762 Keil and *Epileptones* 884-6. ⁵See "In Praise of the Less Abundant Life," CJ 42.334f. ⁶In "Classical Studies presented to James A. Kleist, S.J." (St. Louis, 1946). Father Deters, "Mezentius and Lausus—A Virgilian Tragedy," CB 8.57-9, stresses the harsher aspects of Mezentius. But Aeneas is called *improbis* by the other side; and even when called *pius* in 10.591 is indulging in bitter jest over a fallen foe, after contemptuously rejecting appeals for mercy (524f) from another victim. War cannot be made pretty.

The Roman Social Conscience

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The unparalleled accomplishment of the ancient Romans in extending and consolidating their *imperium* over the diverse peoples of the Mediterranean World and of a large part of Europe is customarily attributed chiefly to their skill in the arts of warfare and of administration. There are, however, ample historical data to prove that much more than technical skill is needed to effect conquest by armed force and to resolve victory by a *bona pax*. The tremendous events of World Wars I and II and the troublous periods following the cessation

of hostilities give immediate support to the validity of this argument.

If, therefore, we would more accurately estimate the stature of the Romans, we cannot permit our calculations to be vitiated by that academic *idée fixe* which ascribes all that was "best" in Roman culture to the influence of Greek culture. Without minimizing the intellectual prowess of ancient Greece, we can attribute to the "Founding Fathers" of the Roman Republic an exceptionally keen ability of coping with the civic and political problems of their own society. Similarly, without detracting from the nimble-witted Greeks that freshness of outlook, vigor of imagination, and penetration of thought which pervade the pages of their representative thinkers, we can find in the body of Latin literature a wealth of examples to disprove that by comparison the Romans were dull, pedantic, and prosaic. Their remarkable economic and political history extending over almost 1000 years, even more than their literatures, loudly proclaims that they were an alert, robust, and eminently practical people with supreme confidence in their destiny and in their capacity to achieve it.

This confidence stemmed from that characteristic virility and moral stamina which centuries of ethnic incubation in West Central Italy had produced in their ancestors, the *prisci Latini*. Under the shameful circumstances of the Etruscan occupation, these Latin characteristics became crystallized and were brought to a focus at Rome, the Etruscan base of operations in Latium. As a result, the effete Etruscans were eventually expelled from Rome, and the Romans who were the spearhead of this action continued to assert their leadership by bringing under their control the older Latin communities and, in time, all of Central Italy. These same characteristics with their roots firmly imbedded in an agrarian economy prompted the Romans for three centuries more to regard with suspicion and disapproval the commercialism and the inane luxuries attendant on commercialism which the Greek colonists had brought to Southern Italy. It was these characteristics which enabled the Romans, whenever necessity required, to muster an army of hardy herdsmen-farmers determined to protect their lands from invasion and conquest and to extend their frontiers in the face of increasingly hostile activities on their borders. Seldom, indeed, has a people displayed such proud virility coupled with moral restraint as the Romans of the early Republic exhibited in preserving their cultural identity during the initial stages of their economic and political expansion.

The essential conservatism of the Romans which was thus evolved reflected their deep-seated respect for the *mos maiorum*, traditional practice and procedure. It was the *mos maiorum* which the civil magistrate of the Republic invoked to justify his conduct in the exercise of his official authority, especially when his conduct was questioned or opposed. It was the *mos maiorum* which the Senate, the advisory body to the magistrates, itself composed mostly of ex-magistrates, scrupulously observed in formulating those deliberate opinions which it handed down in the form of *consulta*. It was the *mos maiorum* which the religious magistrates utilized to expose and to denounce those foreign cults which had made their appearance at Rome and which were considered

to be subversive of the best interests of the State and of the individual citizen. It was the *mos maiorum* which was the controlling factor in maintaining the unity and stability of the Roman family in that the head of the family, the *pater familias*, was constrained to respect it at every turn in the exercise of his seemingly unlimited authority, *patria potestas*. And it was the *mos maiorum* which constituted the broad basis of inflexible censure and ostracism among the Romans in their social intercourse. Thus, the *mos maiorum* was the synthetic expression of the Roman social conscience, both in public and in private life. What were the principal elements of this synthesis?

First and foremost among the several elements that made up the Roman social conscience was *gravitas*. This cardinal virtue, which Cicero called a peculiarly Roman attribute of character, is to be identified with the self-respect and dignity of the individual overcast with a strong feeling that life is a serious business. To the degree to which the individual displays *gravitas*, to that degree he is believed to be a responsible member of society worthy of the respect of his fellow citizens. The Romans contrasted with their own *gravitas* the *levitas Graecorum*, the fickleness and superficiality of the Greeks, as shown by their ready disposition to accommodate their words and actions to any situation, so as thereby to serve their immediate interests. Such opportunistic conduct seemed to the Romans to indicate a lack of character, since it was the antithesis of *gravitas*, self-respect and dignity deriving from an earnest effort to conform to a stable and respected code of conduct, the *mos maiorum*.

A particularized aspect of *gravitas* is *virtus*, manliness. The denotative force of the term *virtus* becomes apparent in the fact that the Romans reserved the word *vir* for a more definite type of individual than a mere male member of the human race. The concepts basic to *vir* and *virtus* are those of strength, energy, potency, courage. The *vir* is a man who has real get-up, that is, strength of character, who has the will to succeed (*perseverantia*), who is not deterred from pursuing his objectives through lack of courage (*fortitudo*), and who has the reserves of mental resolution (*constantia*) and of moral conviction (*recta conscientia*) to prompt him to surmount all obstacles and reverses that may come between him and the attainment of these objectives. Without such fundamental *virtus*, the *gravitas* that an individual might parade is only affectation, promposity, stuffiness.

The *vir* is not, however, to be identified with the rugged individualist who beats and slashes his way to his goal without respect for the feelings and rights of his fellow citizens. He is, indeed, less of a *vir* to the extent to which he fails or refuses to recognize that his conduct should reflect moderation (*temperantia*), uncomplaining endurance of reverses (*patientia*), the principle of fair dealing (*iustitia*), propriety (*pudor*), honesty (*probitas*), and reliability (*fides*). If he displays these virtues, he merits *honor*, the esteem of society, either as *auctoritas*, the weighty influence which an individual so respected wields as a private citizen, or as *potestas*, the authority which his fellow citizens can vest in him by electing him to public office.

Gravitas finds its fullest and most moral expression in

pietas. Whereas *virtus* in its many aspects encourages a man to live a useful life that will be profitable both to himself and to society, *pietas* motivates his life with a profound sense of duty and responsibility. In short, *pietas* gives meaning to life in that it relates the conduct of the individual to the three primary agencies on which his existence depends, namely, the gods, the State, and the family. The *vir pius*, therefore, shows a dutiful respect for his ancestral deities and dutifully worships them according to the prescribed cults and ceremonies. Similarly, he acknowledges the dominant role which they play in all the affairs of his life and, therefore, his complete dependence on their will (*fas*). Accordingly, anything in his conduct that does not accord with the divine will is *nefas* and brands the perpetrator as *impius*, *nefarius*, *sceleratus*, ungodly, sinful, wicked.

The *vir pius* further exhibits moral maturity by recognizing also his obligations to the State. He does nothing, therefore, that will seriously embarrass or affect adversely the welfare of the State; he does not obstinately oppose his will to that of the body politic; he prepares himself to serve the State to the full extent of his natural endowments; and he is ready and willing, if need be, to die for the preservation of the State. The *vir pius*, moreover, admits that the interests of his family take precedence over his personal claims and preferences. If he is subject to the authority of a *pater familias*, he will dutifully respect that authority. If he is himself a *pater familias*, he will so exercise his authority as to maintain and advance the social, economic, and political status of the family, with due regard to the personal interests of all the members and without placing his own interests above those of the entire family. Thus, the three agencies which gave life to and nurtured the Roman in infancy and which continued to be more or less sustaining factors of his adult life were thought to deserve that ultimate degree of mental deference and of moral respect that was defined by the term *pietas*.

Now, there was no public press in ancient Rome in whose pages the virtues could be extolled and moral delinquency exposed. The Romans, moreover, did not regularly repair to the temples, as we attend church services on the Sabbath, to renew their vows for right doing and to hear their priests explain the will of the gods and threaten dire consequences for the unregenerate sinner. In fact, they were given small opportunity to participate, and then only on special occasions and only as spectators, in the religious ceremonies which the priests, who were appointed by and were responsible only to the State, carried out in the interests of the State. The ethical systems of the several schools of Greek philosophy, once the study of philosophy was introduced into the Roman schools, served as a guide and corrective only to the relatively few who continued their formal education in and beyond the school of the *rhetor*.

Through what channels, then, did the moral beliefs of the Romans flow steadily into the consciousness of successive generations and renew the vitality of the social conscience? The Roman practice of worship in the home which daily brought all the members of the family together before the family altar was, undoubtedly, for many centuries the single greatest force for inculcating

and strengthening *pietas* throughout the body social. The *pater familias* who conducted this worship acquired thereby in the home a sacerdotal position parallel to that of the priests who maintained the cults of the State religion in the public temples. Since the *pater familias*, moreover, was held responsible by law for the conduct of all the members of his family, it was he who personally instructed his children, especially his sons, in the moral concepts of right and wrong, of good and evil, of honorable and dishonorable, and in the basic laws incorporated in the Twelve Tables. Thus, in the home he occupied a magisterial position comparable to that of the magistrates who occupied the public offices, and it was he who gave his sons their first lessons in the several qualities comprising *virtus*. The extent to which the *pater familias* had succeeded in filling effectively his dual role of *sacerdos* and of *magistratus* in the home would be reflected in the degree of *gravitas* his sons displayed as they approached the earliest age at which they could acquire citizenship, namely 14. Whereas he did not ignore the moral development of his daughters, he seldom gave to them the same attention that he devoted to his sons, but instead usually made his wife responsible for their training in maidenly modesty (*pudor*) and chastity (*castitas*), and certainly in those arts by which some day they could qualify as efficient wives in the management of their husbands' homes.

In connection with this well-ordered pattern of authority in the Roman family, it should be noted that *frugalitas*, the careful and calculated expenditure of money only for basic necessities as dictated by physical requirements, by custom, or by unusual circumstances, was also a cardinal virtue among the early Romans. This virtue, however, must not be confused with *sordes*, stinginess, or with *avaritia*, greed. It is, instead, thriftiness (*parsimonia*) in contrast to the wasteful expenditure of money (*profusio*) and to extravagance (*luxuria*). The attitude of early Roman society toward persons who took a light view of *frugalitas* was, indeed, so censorious that such persons were regarded as unreliable and, therefore, as undesirable citizens. Since the *pater familias* was given complete legal authority over the capital holdings of all the members of his family (*res familiaris*), it is clear that the families individually were the proving ground of *frugalitas* of every degree and that collectively they constituted the keystone of the economic structure of the State.

There were also arenas outside the family circle that served to exhibit the rewards of virtue and the penalties of vice. The rustic festivals of the early Republic were enlivened by the presence of quasi-professional monologists or of dialogists who made their fun at the expense of their auditors. From our viewpoint, they were heartless in commenting without reserve on the physical appearance of such as were deformed, disfigured, or abnormal. Yet, they seldom made these cruel observations without relating the deficiencies to some imperfection of character. In this dramatic manner, moral faults were made to appear gross and were caricatured as ugly and repulsive on the assumption that such faults not infrequently leave their marks in the form of physical or mental defects. Personal offense was not intended and could be taken only when the observation suited the character of the person ridiculed.

Similarly, the Oscan farce, the first theatrical piece to appear at Rome, was unadulterated drollery of the sort we associate with slapstick comedy. As such, it not only made an immediate hit with the Romans, but thereafter remained the favorite theatrical entertainment of the Roman masses. Underlying its rudimentary plot and its buffoonery and bombast, there was a strong note of disdain for the characters who so poignantly displayed their gullibility, their gluttony, their self-importance, their servility, and their craftiness. Its blunt and direct appeal to the elemental emotions that appear comic and, if unrestrained, ridiculous, when observed in others, served to emphasize to Roman audiences qualities that were antithetical to those comprising their cardinal virtue, *gravitas*.

It is noteworthy that the *fabula palliata*, that is, comedy written in Latin but modelled in all its parts on the Greek Comedy of Manners, did not enjoy a wide or a long popularity at Rome. Even the comedies of Plautus, which openly disregarded those niceties of construction and that refinement of diction which characterized the plays of Menander, seem not to have competed successfully with the farces of Novius and of Pomponius and of less able playwrights whose names are no longer extant. Moreover, the *fabula crepidata*, tragedy in Latin closely modelled on Greek tragedy, was even less appreciated at Rome. Although tragedy by its awesome examination of the dire punishments and the gross injustices that the gods and Fate mete out to mankind stirred the Greek soul to its depths, it left Roman audiences by and large unimpressed, except by the unseemly intensity of the action. We are justified in concluding, I believe, that neither Greco-Roman comedy nor Greco-Roman tragedy exerted any appreciable influence on the Roman social conscience.

The Roman had a penchant not only for comic banter, witticisms, and repartee, but also for concise, pithy expressions of moral sentiment that were thought to have universal validity. These axiomatic truths he called *sententiae*, since presumably they represented considered judgments derived from many years of corroborative experience. They were part and parcel of the repertory of every Roman orator and barrister, for they concretely served his purpose, whenever he sought to substantiate his argument with succinct versions of the *mos maiorum*. These maxims figured prominently in the elementary education of the schoolboy, for they were the material on which he focused his first attempts to write and to read. He encountered them again in the school of the rhetor, the teacher of oratory, where they were used as the basis of exercises designed to train him to examine in detail a widely accepted opinion and to defend or to deny its validity. Moreover, the *sermo plebeius*, the speech of the urban masses, abounded in homely aphorisms, as did the *sermo rusticus*, the speech of the country folk, each reflecting the circumstances and the preoccupations of these two comparatively underprivileged sections of society. Not only the impressive list of *sententiae* which have been collected from the mimes of Publilius Syrus, but even more so the numerous proverbial phrases that are found in almost every prominent Latin writer testify to the fondness of the Romans for this type of pungent moralization.

Yet, the outcries of the Roman social conscience were expressed most completely and emphatically by the Latin satirists. The sharp and painful contrast between the dictates of the *mos maiorum* on the one hand and contemporary social conditions and tendencies on the other was the spur to those wits who had the courage to lecture their fellow citizens on the dangers inherent in such moral delinquency. Considerations of space force me to forego any comment on the contributions of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Lucilius to the development of the satire as a literary piece and to confine my attention to Horace and Juvenal, the universally acknowledged masters of this peculiarly Roman literary genre.

Horace lived and flourished in the latter half of the first century B.C.; Juvenal, in the latter half of the first century A.D. Horace experienced the tremors of the violent social upheaval attending the collapse of the Republic. Whereas he was badly bruised emotionally, economically, and politically by his own part in these events, he recovered his self-possession and by a stroke of rare fortune was enabled to live out his life in the complete security provided by the patronage of the first ruler of the Empire, Augustus, and especially by the latter's chief counselor, Maecenas. Juvenal, on the other hand, was heir to the bitter social prejudices engendered successively by the regime of the misanthropic Tiberius, of the insane Caligula, of the bureaucratic Claudius, of the schizophrenic Nero, and he chafed under the tyranny of the sadistic Domitian. These few data help to explain why Horace's stylus sketched the shortcomings and foibles of mankind with comparatively genial strokes, and by invoking the comic sought to restrain the individual from making foolish and wrong choices of conduct. They explain also why Juvenal's stylus was a vitriolic barb which he hurled with the grim determination and righteous indignation of an Old Testament prophet at all who in their several indecent ways had made the virtuous life appear drab, *passée*, inexpedient, ridiculous.

In short, Horace, used the prod, whereas Juvenal wielded the whip. Horace rationalized the folly of vice; Juvenal anathematized the devotees of vice. Horace's admonitions were an adaptation of the later and less stern precepts of Stoic philosophy; Juvenal's fulgurations emanated from the core of the Roman social conscience of the early Republic. Horace, therefore, is the more cosmopolitan and sophisticated; Juvenal, the more provincial and earnest.

Together, therefore, the Satires of Horace and of Juvenal are not only monuments in Latin literature, but more particularly the voices of wise and courageous men arousing and instructing the social conscience. For all who can read, they serve to show, even to this day, how progressive and irremediable is the degeneracy of a society that puts wealth and position above personal self-respect and integrity, that tolerates corruption in high places, that substitutes expediency for principle, that renounces the restraints of religion and morals, and that denies the dignity of the individual by identifying the successful life with the attainment of those tangible rewards that Materialism enticingly holds out to the duped and the unregenerate.

The Classical Bulletin

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Editorial

The Xavier A.B. Honors Curriculum

In the December issue of the CLASSICAL BULLETIN (vol. 25, no. 2, p. 17) we carried a brief account of a new A.B. Honors Curriculum inaugurated last fall at Xavier University, Cincinnati. The College of Liberal Arts of that institution has in the meantime published a more complete prospectus of this curriculum than was then available.* As we believe that this new venture is of great significance for the modern American educational scene and will consequently be of real interest not only to classicists but also to liberal arts administrators throughout the country, we propose to give a rather full account of it here by freely excerpting the Xavier prospectus. Perhaps our summary may give an idea to some sorely harassed dean or despondent head of a classics department, who "seeing, may take heart again."

Here is the ringing manifesto of the Xavier enterprise as it appears on pages three and four of the prospectus. In its own way, it is not without some claim to being a little classic.

We live in startling and troubled times, amid great scientific advances and dreadful international crises. We have reason to fear for the very existence of our civilization and way of life. We feel that we may in very truth be standing on the brink of an abyss.

Yet in the midst of times like these we at Xavier have seen fit to institute a starry-eyed, idealistic course of studies for youths who are to face the unknown world of tomorrow. Why have we embarked on such a venture?

We have done so not only because of our abiding faith in such a course of studies; not only because such a curriculum has been traditional for centuries in Jesuit universities wherever and whenever students could be found; not only because of the need of modern men for Christian humanism, a need so crying that even outside our tradition men like Toynbee, Hutchins and General Eisenhower have recommended such studies by name or by implication.

We do so because we know from history that in so doing we are fighting the never-ending fight of man against barbarism and the forces of dissolution. In times like these when the whole of our world was threatened with extinction this same good fight was fought and won by Columban and Bede, Aldhelm, Alcuin, Theodore, Charlemagne, Alfred, Anselm, Scotus, Erigena, Gerbert, Lanfranc, Bernard of Chartres, John of Salisbury and Thomas Aquinas. The truth that the grace of God if it is to succeed must descend on human things and not inhuman was preserved in many a lonely cell and in many a cloister; it was taught along the hedges in the

fields, and fought for to the death. We are confident of our cause.

Unfortunately in the stress and confusion of our day the minds of men are again set upon mere survival. The permanent and important things of life, which make up our heritage, have been submerged in the panic of a search for security. Men have forgotten that security can be based only on those things that are themselves secure. And the secure things are these: the great languages and the great literatures by which men communicate their ideals and aspirations; the great history of human thought; the poetry, tragedy, history, oratory and philosophy by which we come to an understanding of the mind and heart of man and the ways of God with humankind, and to an understanding of the dignity of man and his relationships with his fellowmen.

Youth can hardly be expected to understand fully the value of such knowledge and such understanding. "Today is so short and tomorrow so uncertain." Youth is always allured by technical or specialized knowledge that will make that tomorrow seem a little more secure.

Yet perhaps the tradition of twenty centuries and more has not been wholly dissipated. Last spring we explained the advantages of the Honors Course to several high school seniors. We hoped that something we said would strike a chord of understanding in them and in their parents. This fall some twenty freshmen of high ability enrolled for such a course! We were thus enabled to offer them as a group a carefully chosen non-elective curriculum, picked professors and the advantage of individual attention in a small class.

We hope that future years will see the fulfillment of this small beginning. The enrollment in future years will be limited. Or rather, as the demand increases we hope to divide the freshman groups into two or more sections. This development will depend, however, on our ability to procure enough professors of proven excellence and on our ability to absorb the financial sacrifices entailed by such a venture.

After this preamble the prospectus presents the Honors Faculty as thus far constituted: eight distinguished scholars and experienced teachers, whose specialized training falls within the fields of philosophy, classics, English literature and dramatics, history, the natural and social sciences.

The principles by which the framers of this curriculum were chiefly guided are then briefly stated:

1. Ninety percent of human life is concerned with thought and language; to be able to think clearly and express one's thoughts cogently must be the goal of any true education.
2. To achieve this goal three things are necessary:
 - (a) a solid training in the structure (grammar, syntax and vocabulary) of language, especially of Latin and Greek, the basic languages of western civilization;
 - (b) a solid foundation in the forms of thought, formal logic and philosophy, mathematics and the inductive process of the sciences;
 - (c) An acquaintance with the great writers and thinkers of the world against their historical backgrounds.

Now for an outline of the curriculum content throughout the four years.

FIRST YEAR

In the First Year the students receive a thorough foundation for an understanding of language. Students with high-school Greek are given an intensive course in French; one of the graduation requirements is a reading knowledge of some modern language. Students who took a modern language instead of Greek in high school are expected to keep up privately their facility in that language; in addition, they are given eight semester hours of elementary Greek culminating in the reading of a speech of Lysias.

Nine semester hours are spent in reading Horace and Livy and in the study of Latin composition. Logic and mathematics furnish training in sound and purposeful thinking. Religion, military training, and English rhetoric and composition,—two semesters of each,—round out the year's work.

SECOND YEAR

The Second Year gives the student an acquaintance with some of the great literature in Latin, Greek, and English. Among the authors read and discussed are Plato, Demosthenes, Vergil, Cicero, Catullus, and Augustine. In English, works of essayists and orators are stressed. The study of mathematics is concluded with integral and differential calculus. Eight semester hours are devoted to physics. Four semester hours are given to religion. The second year of military training is completed.

THIRD YEAR

In the Third Year the formal study of philosophy is begun. Nine semester hours are spent on the fundamental courses of metaphysics, cosmology, and psychology. Ten semester hours are spent in the study of chemistry and its philosophical implications. At the same time Lucretius' "De Rerum Natura" is read in the Latin class. The history of Western civilization is studied throughout both semesters. This study is integrated with the reading of Thucydides and Tacitus in the original. In the second semester the English drama is studied and the reading of three great Greek tragedies is begun.

FOURTH YEAR

In the Fourth Year two main objectives are kept in mind. First, the student's philosophical and historical knowledge is ordered by a study of the Mediaeval and later periods of history coupled with ten semester hours of selected readings from St. Thomas Aquinas in the original. Second, the student's literary studies are focused by an analysis of literary criticism. Longinus' "On the Sublime", Horace's "Ars Poetica", and Aristotle's "Poetics" are studied. Three semester hours are spent in a study of ancient art and archeology. Homer, Juvenal, Tibullus, and Propertius complete the readings of the ancient authors.

Concerning requirements for admission to this Honors Curriculum the prospectus has the following to say:

In order to achieve the personal contact between instructors and students so necessary in true education, the size of the classes in the Honors Course is held to a minimum. Consequently only superior students are admitted, and only those ranking high in their graduating classes should make application. A special board of admissions for the Honors Course will pass on each applicant. The board will consider the applicant's standing in the graduating class, his high school average, the recommendation of his high school principal, and the results of his aptitude and intelligence tests. In some cases the applicant will take special examinations administered by Xavier University.

In addition to the ordinary requirements for admission to Xavier University, students admitted to the Honors Course must present four units of high school Latin. It is desirable, but not necessary, that the student present two units of high school Greek.

Finally, in order not to leave aspirants to law, medicine, and other professions under the impression that this Honors Curriculum is not for them, the prospectus gives the following assurances:

Graduates of the Honors Course will find themselves especially fitted to continue their education in graduate schools or in professional schools of law or medicine. Those who intend to study medicine after graduation will take two summers of specialized work in biology and chemistry during the course. Entrance to a medical school is assured to graduates of the Honors Course.

There is an elixir for you! Such idealism and optimism argue faith. They do more: they *inspire* faith; they make a man want "to know . . . the large air again . . . ; to turn, and see the star, and feel once more the free shrill wind beyond the close" of suffocating technology and technocracy in this inhuman, godless machine age. Here are stout souls to blaze a trail. Who has the courage to follow?

F. A. P.

* *The Honors Course*, published by Xavier University Cincinnati, Ohio, as a supplement to the regular University Bulletin, January, 1949.

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Phaedrus

WILLIAM F. ARNDT

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The subject takes the writer back to those dear days of early youth when the sun shone more brightly, the sky was bluer, and the spring flowers more alluring than has been the case ever since. It was in that almost incredible period of calm and contentment in the nineties of the last century that a kindly teacher introduced my *co-discipuli* and me to the fascinating (and alas! mournful) *fabula* beginning

Ad rivum eundem lupus et agnus venerat
Siti compulsi.

We had to memorize this Latin versification of the old tale, and the decades that have rushed over me in the meantime have in spite of the havoc they created elsewhere not succeeded in uprooting the little plant from Phaedrus' garden.

In my judgment, as I recall the Latin training we received, it was an excellent idea to let our acquaintance with Latin poetry begin with the study of Phaedrus. Here was a poet whom the high school student, with but little knowledge of literature at its highest levels, could understand and appreciate. The subject-matter affords little difficulty, the grotesqueness of speaking animals excites the boyish fancy, the morals to be inculcated are not too profound, and the story narrated is fascinating enough to keep the interest alive till the end is reached. The metre, too, is not intricate; the principles involved can soon be apprehended by the average lad; and without too much suffering he passes through the portals of Latin prosody.

How the times have changed! Poor Phaedrus is put on the shelf. Where are the courageous teachers that still undertake to lead their pupils along this sunny path of delightful didactic poetry, where Latin is learned with ease, wisdom is freely dispensed, and many a key to famous allusions and illustrations is found? The onslaught of other branches of knowledge has been so terrific that the Latin muse has become very shy and retiring. The physical sciences with their admittedly just claims demand more attention than before, but in addi-

tion there is a great deal of sociological drivel, occupying itself with the utterly obvious or with the intangibles of human life and conduct, which has compelled the Latin course to concern itself solely with a few summits of Roman poetry and prose, and to neglect the pleasant groves in the secluded valleys where thrushes sing their sweetest songs and pleasant shade beckons the weary wanderer. It may be that when the much-needed educational adjustment comes, the violence of debates ceases, and calm judgment again directs the course of schools, the kindly old Latin fabulist will be permitted to return from exile and again teach the immortal maxims of morality to youth eager to learn what he offers.

If Phaedrus was our benefactor, he deserves that we now and then pause in our ordinary activities and make him and his work the topic of a little *causerie*. Unfortunately our information about his life is of small compass. Martial has a brief and not complimentary reference to him (3.20.5: *An aemulatur improbi iocos Phaedri*?), and about three hundred years later Avianus (*Epist. ad Theod.*) say that Phaedrus treated a part of the Aesopian Fables in five books. Apart from these brief notes we have to rely entirely on the extremely few data concerning himself which he supplies in his not voluminous writing. As he tells us in the prologue to the third of his five books of fables, he was born on the Pierian Mountain, on the southeastern coast of Macedonia, the mountain which was celebrated as the birthplace of the Muses. The lines telling us about his birthplace are charming:

Ego, quem Pierio mater enixa est iugo,
In quo tonanti sancta Mnemosyne Iovi
Fecunda novies artium peperit chorum.

It seems then that he was of Macedonian or Greek nationality. Early in life he was brought to Italy and, at that, as a slave. Was he kidnapped by wicked people, who carried him off to Rome and there sold him in the open market to the highest bidder? Did financial disaster overtake the family, resulting in his loss of freedom? We cannot tell. Since in the manuscripts he is called *Augusti libertus*, we assume that his master was the Emperor Augustus (who died 14 A.D.) and that from him he obtained his liberty. The conjecture that the emperor was delighted with the excellent gifts of mind and heart of his slave and thereby was induced to grant him freedom, is one that the admirers of the poet may be permitted to indulge.

There is a little hint as to the education he received. In the Epilogue of Book III he says:

Ego quondam legi quam puer sententiam:
"Palam mutire plebeio piaculum est;"
Dum sanitas constabit pulchre meminero.

The line, *Palam mutire plebeio piaculum est* is found in the tragedy of Ennius called *Telephus*. It is interesting to note that in his boyhood he read this work of the old Latin poet, which justifies the assumption that early in life he was trained, or trained himself, in literature. There is no further information about his formative years or about the time when he arrived at manhood. Did he ever marry? His poems are silent on that point, and antiquity has not seen fit to enlighten us.

His life was not unexciting. The writer of verses giving instruction on human conduct can hardly avoid becoming satirical now and then, unless he is willing to

let his dishes remain altogether spiceless; and the minute he cooks and serves with some boldness, there will be offended palates in the halls of the mighty, and he will find some patrons turned into enemies and his name on various black lists. When Phaedrus issued the first two books of his Fables, which appeared innocent enough, he had to experience how sensitive vain rulers can be. It was in the days when Sejanus was the undisputed favorite of the Emperor Tiberius, and this self-seeking politician seems to have suspected that the fable of the proud crow (1.3) which ornamented itself with peacock feathers and strutted about with contemptuous mien, till the misappropriated finery was plucked by incensed fellow-crows and the foolish bird itself soundly whacked and pecked, was a sly allusion to his unwarranted assumption of extraordinary power. Other secret attacks on himself he may have sensed in the fable of the wolf and the lamb (1.2), alluded to before, where the moral is given in the words

Haec propter illos scripta est homines fabula,
Qui fictis causis innocentes opprimunt,

which fitted his case only too well; and in the one of the frogs who asked for a king (1.3). It will be recalled that when the frogs were not satisfied with the patient, inactive log which Jupiter had given them as their sovereign, he sent them a stork, who promptly devoured his subjects. The lesson is

Vos quoque, o cives (ait)
Hoc sustinete, maius ne veniat malum.

Still more likely is the view that he saw an allusion to his own wicked course in the fable treating of the frogs and the sun (1.6). The sun intended to get married. When the frogs heard of it, they raised a clamor that reached the very stars. "What is the matter?" Jupiter inquired. The reply was that if the sun in his solitary bachelor estate wrought such disasters to pools and lakes, drying them up mercilessly, what would happen if he should raise a family? Sejanus had induced Livia to poison her husband Drusus, the son of Tiberius, and intended to marry her—a step frustrated by the emperor. At any rate, in the prologue to the third book, which appeared after the death of Tiberius, Phaedrus speaks of *tanta mala* which he had endured because Sejanus was accuser, witness, and judge all in one person. It was safe for him to speak thus openly because Sejanus in the meantime had been executed as an enemy of the state. What the afflictions which he had to suffer were, whether they, as has been conjectured, consisted in banishment with its manifold ills, is not reported. It seems that after this storm his existence was tranquil and he could follow his career without governmental molestation. The last fable of the five books, which treats of an old dog, not lacking in courage, but in strength and physical equipment, is held to indicate that he reached a ripe old age. Wistfully he says at the conclusion to his friend Philetus:

Hoc cur, Philete, scripserim, pulchre vides.

The application, indeed, is very obvious. The literary activity of Phaedrus fell in the reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. (Cf. Siebelis, *Phaedri fabulae*, (school edition). Intr., p. xi).

Of the very appropriate and brief Prologue which introduces the whole collection of fables, a few lines had better be quoted here as we pass to a general discussion of the work of Phaedrus,

Aesopus auctor quam materiam repperit
Hanc ego polivi versibus senariis.
Duplex libelli dos est: quod risum movet
Et quod prudenti vitam consilio monet.

He promises to submit the material that Aesop had found and treated. We must not fail to note that he intends both to entertain and to instruct. Aesop is said to have been a physically deformed Phrygian, who was a contemporary of Croesus and Solon. He traveled a great deal. Finally, sent by Croesus to Delphi, he was, so the story goes, falsely accused and executed by being cast down a high precipice. He was not the inventor of the fable; it had existed for a long time. Nor did he write his fables; they were handed down by word of mouth. What characterized Aesop was the cleverness or ingenuity with which he made animals or inanimate things play the roles of men and so brought out important truths. Gradually fables from other sources too were given the title of Aesopian. Students of Plato will recall that according to the *Phaedo* (ch. IV) Socrates, in prison awaiting the day when he would have to drink the hemlock, occupied himself at times with putting these fables into verse.

That the fable is not to be regarded as an unworthy *genre* of literature is evident from what has just been said and from the eminent men generally that have either themselves written fables or discussed this type of composition. We think of La Fontaine, a prolific and celebrated fabulist, and of Lessing, a literary critic of the highest order, who both wrote fables and in penetrating fashion investigated the nature of this type of literary expression. A little poem of Goethe's entitled "The Frogs" may not be well known, and therefore I briefly give its contents. A pond became ice-covered in winter, causing the greatest distress to the frogs that were underneath. They vowed that if this bondage were removed they would come to the top and sing like nightingales. Warm zephyrs removed the cover; but alas! when the frogs had triumphantly swum to the bank, they croaked just as disgustingly as ever. The critics seem agreed that a composition to be entitled to the name of "fable" must make animals or inanimate things the *dramatis personae* and that its purpose must be to inculcate a moral lesson.

As to the relationship of Phaedrus to Aesop, we should entertain a wrong impression if we thought that in his efforts Phaedrus confined himself to the fables of his Greek predecessor. He added a number of stories of his own. In the prologue of the fourth book he says concerning his fables,

Quas Aesopias, non Aesopi, nomino.

He was thus more than a mere versifier; he regarded Aesop as his master and exemplar, but not as the sole source of the material he treated.

In the handling of his metre Phaedrus displays real talent. The verses trip along smoothly, and the rules of Latin prosody are adhered to faithfully. He employs the iambic trimeter, which likewise bears the name *senarius*. The style on the whole is graceful and pleasing, though at times matter-of-fact, and the imagery shows inventiveness and good taste.

A word must be said about the transmission of the text. From the remark of Avianus quoted above, we know

that Phaedrus issued five books of fables. Experts say that various indications show the incompleteness of the collection as contained in the two tenth-century manuscripts which have reached modern times. For one thing, the number of fables varies exceedingly in the different books, as contained in these codices: while book I has 31, book II has only 8, and book V only 10. One naturally surmises that some fables were lost. Besides, in his Prologue introducing all the fables, Phaedrus mentions as one startling feature of his little compositions:

Quod arbores loquantur, non tantum f. aae.

But in vain will the curious reader search the collection for a poem in which trees do any speaking. It seems then that in the process of transmission some fables were discarded or fell by the wayside. Such *a priori* considerations are confirmed by the interesting circumstance that in the beginning of the eighteenth century a manuscript was found in Parma containing a collection of fables gathered by Niccolo Perotti (who died in 1480 as Archbishop of Siponto), of which one section submits compositions of Phaedrus previously known, while mixed with them are 31 which are not contained in the old source. Since the latter are written in the same metre and style as the former, they are held to be productions of Phaedrus and to have been taken by Perotti from manuscripts which were either not known to, or not used by, the tenth century scribes. Nowadays these new fables are usually printed in an appendix. Good editions of Phaedrus are those of L. Mueller (Leipzig 1877), J. Siebelis (Leipzig, 1889⁶), L. Havet (Paris, 1895), J. P. Postgate (Oxford, 1920). If there should be a stern critic who thinks that these columns could have been put to better use by a discussion, let us say, of Cicero's *Cato Maior* or of Horace's *Epistulae*, my reply is the Aesopian fable of Phaedrus (3.14) of the bow that is always bent, yielding this lesson:

Cito rumpes arcum, semper si tensum habueris;
At si laxaris, cum voles erit utilis.

The publication of the twenty-five year index to the CLASSICAL BULLETIN will occasion many more requests for back numbers. Whilst we have a good supply of many recent numbers, our files also show considerable lacunae, especially in the earlier volumes. If any of our subscribers have back numbers or runs which they do not need, we shall be glad to get them. Since we are a non-profit organization, we cannot pay for such numbers, unless perhaps for longer runs. You will do a favor to subscribers who are trying to complete their sets, if you send in back numbers to the Business Editor, or let him know what you have to dispose of and under what conditions.

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Gassendi, a Seventeenth Century Epicurean Humanist

HENRY C. MONTGOMERY
Miami University

Humanism, according to Burekhardt and others after him, meant a secular revolt against theological preoccupations of the medieval mind. Such a definition is not only inadequate but misleading. As Douglas Bush puts it, it is decidedly less than a half-truth. The central tradition of humanism in the Renaissance, according to Bush, was formed by the many Christian humanists who made the classics the helpmate of religion; who fused with Christianity the highest wisdom of those pagans that, guided by the light of reason, had approached the threshold of Christianity.

Among those of this dominant group of humanists the name of Pierre Gassendi, né Gassend, should certainly be included. And in an age when diversity and range were commonplace, the activities of Gassendi are still spectacular—more so, undoubtedly, from the viewpoint of the present era than from his own. For Gassendi was not only a theologian and metaphysician, but a historian, astronomer, naturalist, and mathematician; an opponent of Descartes and scholastic Aristotelianism, but a Catholic priest with orthodox views in theology; the reviver of the atomism of Epicurus and Lucretius, but the canon, and later provost, of the diocese of Digne; the philosophical guide for Thomas Jefferson in some of his most characteristic Epicurean concepts, but the man who, according to Karl Marx, did not understand Epicurus. That Gassendi has not achieved the fame of Kepler, Descartes, Galileo, Hobbes, and Pascal—his friends and correspondents—is understandable, but it is an almost fantastic inversion of chronology and continuity, when it is said in a standard philosophical dictionary that, "In some respects his philosophy resembles Lockes." The relative obscurity of Gassendi is principally due to the fact that he made no startling pronouncements, but the time has come when his total philosophy may have even more significance than the more sharply pointed declarations of his contemporaries and immediate successors.

Pierre Gassendi was born in Provence in 1592. His natural abilities were discovered early in life so that by 1612 he was lecturing in theology at Digne. In 1616 he was called to the chair of philosophy at Aix and a year later took holy orders. During a six year period of teaching at Aix, Gassendi read principally from Montaigne, Seneca, Cicero, Justus Lipsius, Juvenal, Horace, Lucian, Lucretius, and Sextus Empiricus. After additional teaching experience in Grenoble and Paris, Gassendi traveled in Flanders and Holland, from 1628 to 1631. Shortly before this travel period he had become an apologist of Epicurus and continued his Epicurean studies while abroad. In 1632 Gassendi became provost of the Cathedral Church at Digne and did not resume work on Epicurus until 1641. From this year a succession of works on Epicurus and material atomism were produced until the time of his death. In 1645 Gassendi accepted the chair of mathematics at Paris where he died in 1655 the victim, in a way, of science, since his death followed thirteen consecutive bleedings administered according to the medical procedures of that time.

Although Gassendi revived atomism so that, beginning with Boyle and Newton, some results are now known, all too vividly, even to the inhabitants of remote islands, it is the ethics of atomism in which he was especially interested. And it is his moral interpretation of atomism that many have more ultimate significance than the physiochemical considerations which preoccupy us momentarily.

Gassendi was attracted to Epicurus and the atomic theory early in his career. He agreed with Epicurus that the atom was a-tomic and capable of movement. He also agreed that no natural power could create or destroy a single atom. But although in agreement as far as purely natural forces are concerned, Gassendi believed that the atoms were created by God and that God was not only the source of movement of the atoms, but that also He could destroy them. Gassendi also rejected the ancient idea of the swerve of the atom and substituted a divinely guided dynamism from weight. The Epicurean-Lucretian concept was, as far as he was concerned, mechanistic, geometric, and inert.

Anyone interested in Epicureanism is also interested in liberty, and Gassendi was no exception. Yet he was primarily concerned not with physical nor civil liberty, but with it in an inward and moral sense. We can always safeguard our liberty, he felt, in that when on the point of acting, it is always in our power to suspend action, to consider things so as to distinguish the true good from the apparent good. For what is the good, he asked, of prudence, reflection, and counsel if all is regulated in advance?

The nature of the soul is another facet of the study of atomism and Epicureanism that inevitably comes to the front under any consideration of them. Here again, Gassendi differed with the ancient authorities. In Gassendi's concept the soul is composed of two parts, the one irrational, corporeal, a sort of liaison agent between the rational soul and the body; the other rational and intellectual, incorporeal, created by God. The corporeal soul can not survive dissolution but the rational soul, because it is immaterial, is therefore immortal. The fact that a few philosophers and primitive tribes do not believe in the immortality of the soul indicates only that there are those whose intelligence is obscured by either ignorance or passion. One might as well believe, said Gassendi, that men are not seeing bipeds because there are the blind and the lame. And he added that the idea of an immortal soul could not be advanced, if men did not already have a sense of immortality and find it natural; that men can be deceived in matters of no importance, but not in matters that touch them most deeply.

Gassendi accepted the Epicurean tenet that happiness is the sovereign good and the end of good. He noted that the opponents of the Epicurean concept of happiness either distorted it into hedonism or opposed it because of lack of understanding. The Stoics, he said, did not know the true character of Epicureanism because with them virtue was to be sought for itself, whereas with Epicurus virtue was sought for the sake of happiness. And the Epicurean indolence should not be taken to mean a state of torpor, but a state in which all actions of life are carried through calmly and pleasantly. Gassendi made a careful distinction between the pleasure

of the senses and the pleasure of reason, with a clear understanding and acceptance of why Aristotle proposed the contemplative life as the first rule for existence.

From a vantage point of three centuries of development of the atomic theory, since its reintroduction by Gassendi, the mere fact of his concern with the theory does not seem startling or revolutionary. Nor, to a layman at least, does his theology seem particularly unusual. In his own times he was naturally opposed for his own opposition to Aristotle, or parts of Aristotle, and for his absorption in physical science. The facts, or effects, of atomism are now taken for granted and, as we have said, apparent even to inhabitants of remote islands. Aristotle, moreover, has a most felicitous way of surviving both the flatteries of his more zealous followers and the scorn of his most vigorous detractors. In brief, both theologically and scientifically, Gassendi would seem to deserve a place of respect even if he had not developed a philosophy that could embrace both material realities and a Superior Cause that produces harmony and order.

The gap, moreover, between the age of Gassendi and the contemporary period is not as great as it might appear, just as the gap between antiquity and Gassendi is obviously not extensive. It is deservedly old-fashioned to think of history as developing by leaps and jumps that can be collected into neat packages of centuries, ages, and reigns. Gassendi and his Epicurean interpretations were quite alive and active in that threshold of the modern era, the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It was none other than that apostle of Americanism, Thomas Jefferson, who declared himself an Epicurean but—and this may illuminate a little known side of Jefferson—an Epicurean in the moral sense only as interpreted by Gassendi. Late in life Jefferson wished to add a translation of Gassendi's *Syntagma* to a book he was preparing in Greek, Latin, and French texts on the philosophy of Jesus. It was only a few years after Jefferson expressed this wish in a letter to a friend that another analyst of Epicurean atomism and Epicurean independence would summarily reject Gassendi's interpretation as seeking to teach *from* Epicurus and not *about* Epicurus. Gassendi's ideas of the immortality of the soul were regarded as particularly inconsequential by this analyst Karl Marx, who has also been destined to establish an Epicurean concept for society quite at variance with that of his predecessors in time.

Thus the worlds of Epicurus, the atom, Gassendi, Jefferson, and Marx are organically more closely related and interlocked than might appear on the surface, and yet the surface relationships and conflicts are apparent and becoming increasingly more so. The situation may call for some sort of a dialectical resolution but, if a stand is to be taken, the position of Pierre Gassendi would still remain the most tenable, spiritually and morally, the most civilized and reasonable. Gassendi demonstrated in the seventeenth century that material realities and spiritual values are not in any sense related, that also they are not incompatible. He further demonstrated in his studies and subsequent philosophy that classical humanism can be a bulwark and support, as it had been before, of the Christian faith when confronting the changing and hostile forces of a disturbed world.

A Note on Sallust, *Jugurtha*, 16.3

Alfons Kurfess in *Würzburger Jahrbücher* (1947: 2.-371) protests against the emendation *in inimicis* (for the ms* reading *in amicis*) which seems to have crept into all texts of Sallust since Gerlach (1829). He declares that Gerlach himself abandoned his own emendation and returned to the ms reading in his editions of 1851 and 1870; yet apparently all subsequent editions and translations (including Rolfe 1921, Rumpel 1936, Weinstock 1939, Ernout 1941) have retained *in inimicis*. Kurfess holds *mordicus* with Wirz¹¹ (Berlin 1922), who defended the ms reading in *amicis*, and gives Wirz's reasons substantially as follows:

It is unthinkable that after the supporters of Jugurtha had helped the latter's cause to victory in the senate, an outstanding opponent of the Numidian (as Opimius is supposed to have been according to the emendation) should have been chosen to head the embassy to Africa. As Scaurus was in the opposition, it is most likely that the almighty Opimius was conspicuous among the *fautores Jugurthae*. The alleged enmity of Opimius even seems absurd; for it would lead us rather to expect that the cunning and astute Jugurtha would on that very account tender him an all the more exquisitely polite and officious reception, whereas the text says, *TAMEN accuratissime recepit* (and not, as we should expect, *eum, quia, in inimicis habuerat, eo accuratius recepit*). The correct reading would seem, therefore, to be that of the MSS: *eum Jugurtha, tametsi Romae in amicis habuerat, tamen accuratissime recepit* (*id est, says Wirz, and with him Kurfess*), *non ut amicum amicus, sed ut ius legationis regnique dignitas postulabant, summa cura ac diligentia, vitandae suspicionis causa verecundiam callide ostentans.* F. A. P.

* Rolfe, however, in his critical note in the *Loeb Sallust* (*ad. loc.*) avers that *in inimicis* is found in one codex.

L'éducateur doit posséder, outre le feu sacré, une compréhension vaste des réalités de la vie juvénile . . . L'amour sans compréhension est pire que la compréhension sans amour.—P. Frieden

Professor A. M. Withers of Concord College, an old ally of the classical cause ever ready to leap into the breach, has published an article in the January *Educational Forum* entitled "Professors of English on the Latin Question." It contains seven pages of letters from graduate professors which deserve wide circulation not only among teachers of English, but also among educationists and administrative officers. If you are interested, Professor Withers will send you a copy for 10c (20 for \$1.00), as long as the reprints he has last. Address Professor Withers at *Concord College, Athens, West Virginia*.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Swans and Amber: Some Early Greek Lyrics Freely Translated and Adapted by Dorothy Burr Thompson. Toronto, Toronto Press. 1948. \$2.75.

Quintiliani Institutionis Oratoriae Liber XII, Edited by R. G. Austin, M.A. Oxford at the Clarendon Press. 1948. \$3.75.

Hoc carmen quod Henricus Montagu Butler, olim magister Collegi SS. Trinitatis Cantabrigiensis et prius magister princeps Scholae Harroviensis a carmine Anglice a Iohanne Mason Neale scripto secundum Apocalypsin 2.10 in Latinum convertit nuper inveni. Videtur reapse esse scriptum veluti in solatium illius fortis neque unquam satis miserandi Cardinalis Mindszentii cuius casum omnes homines ad taetras immanisque Communistarum beluas omnino profligandas extirpandasque excitare oportet. Nisi Christiani omni discrimine et religionis et generis amoto in commune consulimus, separatim peribimus.

Perge tamen, Fortissime Miles. Sarcina nota est
Quam geris. Es fessus. Fessus et ipse fui.
Sed mihi tu propior, quo tristior, ibis ovanti,
Et faciet nostrum te magis iste labor.

BONAMICUS ACTENSIS

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